SHRI KALYAN ROY: In Calcutta it is not eight thousand but it is eighty thousand.

SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI: Sir, the reasons that the hon. Minister has mentioned in the statement are that over-billing arises out of clerical errors and out of technical and other faults. Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether corrupt practice is also one of the factors of over-billing, because in the case of technical and clerical errors the Government have taken certain measures to combat them, as mentioned by the Minister in the statement. So, I would like to know what the Government is going to do regarding eliminating the corrupt practices in the matter of over-billing of telephones.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL: Sir, there are four factors which are responsible for over-billing or excess billing, namely, (1) clerical errors, (2) technical defects, (3) as he mentioned, some bad elements indulge in diversion of lines, and (4) last but not the least, some of the subscribers forget that when they make an STD call, the charges sometimes are 12 times or 16 times of ordinary calls, and they go on talking without realising that the bill would increase. As far as diversion is concerned, corruption is concerned, only last week this hon. House passed a Bill under which we proposed to make the diversion of lines a penal offence, a cognisable offence and punishment has been provided for it.

SHRI BISWA GOSWAMI: Sir, I want to know from the hon. Minister that now that a punishment has been provided for such offences, how many such persons have been so far punished. I want to know also what effect it had after the introduction of these measures. Has there been any improvement in the situation? I also want to know from the Minister whether it is not a fact that complaints from the subscribers regarding over-billing are not attended to; they are simply asked to deposit the money and rest contented. So I want the Minister to tell us whether it is not a fact that complaints are not attended to.

SHRI V. N. GADGIL: It is not correct. In Delhi alone, in 1982-83 we returned one crore of rupees as rebate when we found that the billing was not correct. In such cases, we do give relief. So it is not correct to say that complaints are not attended to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

बीड़ी मजदूरों का शोषण

*201. **श्री राम नरेश कुशवाहा :** क्या **श्रम और पुनर्वास** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 19 जुलाई, 1984 के "जनसत्ता" में "बीड़ी मजदूरों का घोर शोषण" शीर्षक के अंतर्गत प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है ; और

(ग) सरकार इस संबंध में क्या कार्यवाही करने का विचार रखती है ?

श्रम और पुनर्वास मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री धर्मवीर) : (क) जी, हां।

(ख) समाचार में उल्लिखित अधिक महत्वपूर्ण ब्यौरे निम्नलिखित हैं :-

(1) मोहम्दाबाद, जामनिया, सैयदपुर और गाजीपुर में लगभग 12 बीड़ी प्रतिष्ठान हैं जिनमें लगभग 70,000 श्रमिक नियोजित हैं। काफी संख्या में महिलाएं और बालक भी नियोजित किए जाते हैं जो अपने घरों में काम करते हैं। आरोप लगाया गया है कि नियोजिकों द्वारा

विभिन्न अवसरों पर उनका शोषण किया जाता है ।

(ii) नियोजक विभिन्न श्रम और अन्य कानूनों के उपबंधों का पालन करने में टालमटोल करते हैं ।

(ग) बीड़ी श्रमिकों के रोजगार की शर्तें, बीड़ी और सिगार कर्मकार (नियोजन की शर्तें) अधिनियम, 1966 द्वारा विनियमित होती हैं । राज्य सरकारें बीड़ी श्रमिकों के कल्याण के लिए उस अधिनियम में निर्दिष्ट सांविधिक उपबन्धों को लागू करने के लिए संबंधित सरकारें हैं । समाचार के ब्यौरों को उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार के ध्यान में आवश्यक कार्यवाही के लिए ला दिया गया है ।

Supply of Benzene to the Manufacturers of Washing Powder

*204. SHRI SYED RAHMAT ALI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total demand for Benzene, its total production and supply to the manufacturers of washing powder;

(b) what quantity of Benzene is presently imported;

(c) what is the procedure for the supply of Benzene to the manufacturers of washing powder;

(d) why Benzene is not being supplied to the manufacturers of washing powder according to their requirements; and

(e) whether Government propose to modify the procedure for the supply of Benzene to actual users only and plug black marketing in the commodity?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI SHIV SHANKAR): (a), (b) and (d) The demand and indigenous production of Linear Alkyl Benzene (LAB) in 1984-85 are estimated at 76,000 tonnes and 24,000 tonnes respectively. The gap of 52,000 tonnes will be covered by imports arranged by State Trading Corporation.

(c) Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (IPCL) is the only manufacturer of Linear Alkyl Benzene (LAB) in the country. The distribution policy for LAB being followed by IPCL during 1984-85 is as follows:—

Based on the quantities contracted by them during 1983-84 or their past average off-take, the consumers have been categorised into (i) those whose contracted quantity in 1983-84 or average past offtake was less than 5 MT per month and (ii) those whose contracted quantity in 1983-84 or average offtake, the consumers have 5 MT per month.

(a) Consumers in category (i) are allocated a quantity equal to the quantity contracted by them in 1983-84 or, in case there was no such contract, a quantity equal to their past average offtake.

(b) Consumers in category (ii) are allocated a quantity equal to 65 per cent of the quantity contracted by them in 1983-84 or, in case there was no such contract, a quantity equal to 65 per cent of their past offtake subject to a minimum of 5 MT per month.

The imported LAB is allocated by State Trading Corporation to the actual users on *pro-rata* basis taking into account the quantities registered by them on the basis of past consumption data certified by Chartered Accountant. While making such allocation, supplies made by IPCL are also taken into account.

(e) LAB is being supplied to actual users only.